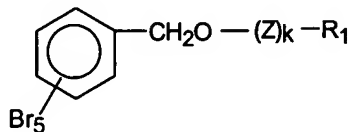


1. (Amended) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether of the formula:



wherein:

- Z represents the group $-(Y-O)_n-$, wherein Y is a linear or branched $-(C_2-C_8)$ alkylene, ~~preferably CH_2CH_2 and $CH_2CH(CH_3)$~~ ;
- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;
- k may be 0 or 1;
- R_1 represents hydrogen, a linear or branched $-(C_1-C_{10})$ alkyl, a linear or branched $-(C_2-C_{10})$ alkylene-OH, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R_1 represents a linear or branched $-(C_4-C_{10})$ alkyl or a linear or branched $-(C_2-C_{10})$ alkylene-OH and when k is 1, R_1 represents hydrogen, a linear or branched $-(C_1-C_4)$ alkyl, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl.

2. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein Z represents a group selected from $-(C_2H_4O)_n$ and $-(C_3H_5O)_n$, wherein n represents 2.

3. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein $k=1$ and R_1 represents H, methyl or butyl.

4. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein $k=0$ and R_1 represents branched (C_8) alkyl or linear (C_6) alkylene-OH.

5. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, selected from the group consisting of:

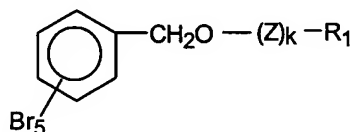
- (i) pentabromobenzyl-O- $CH_2-CH_2OCH_3$;
- (ii) pentabromobenzyl-O- $CH_2CH_2O(CH_2)_3CH_3$;
- (iii) pentabromobenzyl-O- $(CH_2CH_2O)_2CH_3$;
- (iv) pentabromobenzyl-O- $(CH_2CH_2O)_2H$;

- (v) pentabromobenzyl -O- (CH₂)₆OH;
- (vi) pentabromobenzyl -O-CH₂CH(C₂H₅) (CH₂)₃CH₃;
- (vii) pentabromobenzyl -O-CH₂CH₂OCH₂CH=CH₂;
- (viii) pentabromobenzyl -O- (C₃H₆O)₂-CH₃
- (ix) pentabromobenzyl -O- (C₃H₆O)₂-H

6. (Amended) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether compound according to claim any one of claims 1 to 5, for use as a fire retardant.

7. (Amended) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether compound according to claim any one of claims 1 to 5, for use as a fire retardant in a polymeric composition or in polymer-containing composition.

8. (Amended) A fire retarded polymeric or polymer-containing composition comprising a pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether of the formula:



wherein Z, R₁ and k are as defined in claim 1.

wherein:

- Z represents the group -(Y-O)_n-, wherein Y is a linear or branched -(C₂-C₈)alkylene-;
- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;
- k may be 0 or 1;
- R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₁₀)alkyl, a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀)alkylene-OH, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R₁ represents a linear or branched -(C₄-C₁₀)alkyl or a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀)alkylene-OH and when k is 1, R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₄)alkyl, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl.

9. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 8, wherein said polymer is selected from the group consisting of chlorinated polyethylene, polyethylene,

polypropylene, styrene resins, high-impact polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene copolymer, flexible and rigid polyurethane, epoxy resins and unsaturated polyester resins.

10. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is polypropylene.

11. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is high impact polystyrene (HIPS).

12. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is acryl-butadiene-styrene terpolymer (ABS).

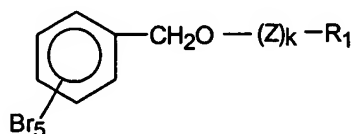
13. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is polyurethane.

14. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 8, wherein said polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polypropylene copolymer, high impact polystyrene (HIPS) and acryl-butadiene-styrene terpolymer (ABS), and said pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether is selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂-CH₂OCH₃;
- (ii) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂CH₂O(CH₂)₃CH₃;
- (iii) pentabromobenzyl-O-(CH₂CH₂O)₂CH₃;
- (iv) pentabromobenzyl-O-(CH₂CH₂O)₂H;
- (v) pentabromobenzyl-O-(CH₂)₆OH;
- (vi) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂CH(C₂H₅)(CH₂)₃CH₃;
- (vii) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂CH₂OCH₂CH=CH₂;
- (viii) pentabromobenzyl-O-(C₃H₆O)₂-OCH₃
- (ix) pentabromobenzyl-O-(C₃H₆O)₂-H

15. (Amended) A fire retarded composition according claim ~~to any one of claims 8 to 14~~, further comprising a metal oxide, preferably Sb_2O_3 .

16. (Amended) A process for the preparation of a pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether of the formula:



~~wherein Z, R₁ and k are as defined in claim 1~~

wherein:

- Z represents the group $-(\text{Y}-\text{O})_n-$, wherein Y is a linear or branched $-(\text{C}_2-\text{C}_8)$ alkylene-;
- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;
- k may be 0 or 1;
- R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched $-(\text{C}_1-\text{C}_{10})$ alkyl, a linear or branched $-(\text{C}_2-\text{C}_{10})$ alkylene-OH, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R₁ represents a linear or branched $-(\text{C}_4-\text{C}_{10})$ alkyl or a linear or branched $-(\text{C}_2-\text{C}_{10})$ alkylene-OH and when k is 1, R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched $-(\text{C}_1-\text{C}_4)$ alkyl, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl, comprising

reacting a glycol, a mono-, or di-alcohol of the formula $\text{HO}-(\text{Z})_k-\text{R}_1$, wherein Z, R₁ and k are as defined in claim 1, or the corresponding metal alcoholate thereof, with a pentabromobenzyl halide, preferably pentabromobenzyl bromide, optionally in the presence of a base.

17. (Cancelled) ~~A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, for use as a fire retardant, substantially as described and exemplified in the specification.~~

18. (Cancelled) ~~A process for the preparation of pentabromobenzyl alkyl ethers as defined in claim 1, substantially as described and exemplified in the specification.~~

19. (Cancelled) ~~A fire retarded polymer composition comprising pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, substantially as described and exemplified in the specification.~~

20. (New) The process of claim 16, wherein the pentabromobenzyl halide is pentabromobenzyl bromide.

21. (New) The process of claim 16, wherein the reaction occurs in the presence of a base.

22. (New) The process of claim 16, wherein the linear or branched $-(C_2-C_8)\text{alkylene}-$ is selected from the group consisting of $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$ and $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$ --.

23. (New) A fire retarded polymeric or polymer-containing composition of claim 8, wherein the linear or branched $-(C_2-C_8)\text{alkylene}-$ is selected from the group consisting of $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$ and $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$ --.

24. (New) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein the linear or branched $-(C_2-C_8)\text{alkylene}-$ is selected from the group consisting of $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$ and $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$ --.